BATMAN.
LEGENDS OF THE
DARK KNIGHT
NO 7 MAY 90
150 CAN 185
dccomics.com
Gothic
GRANT MORRISON • KLAUS JANSON
PART TWO OF FIVE

Gothic
a romance

By Grant Morrison and Klaus Janson

IN FIVE VOLUMES

"How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres?"

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

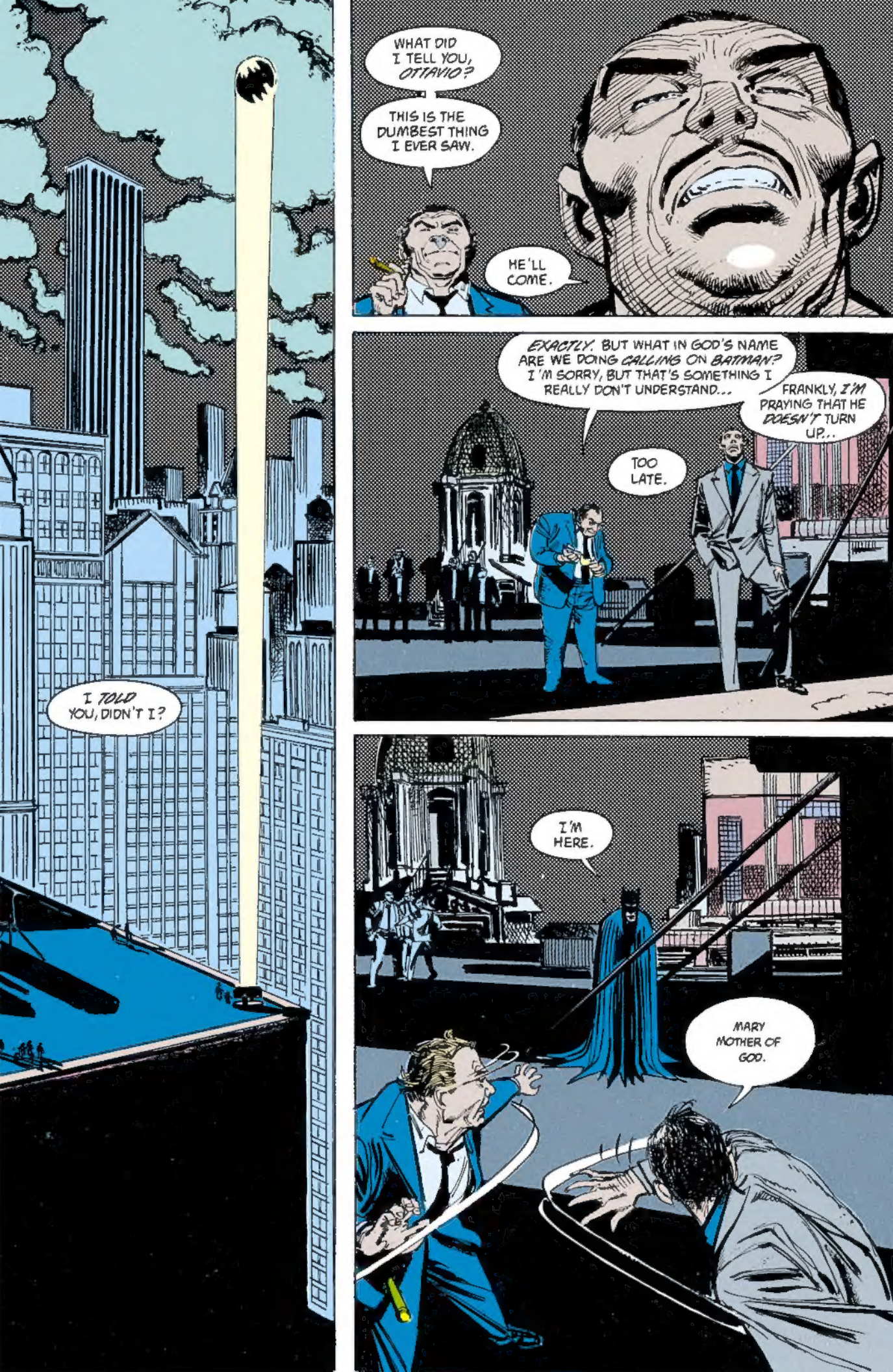
volume two

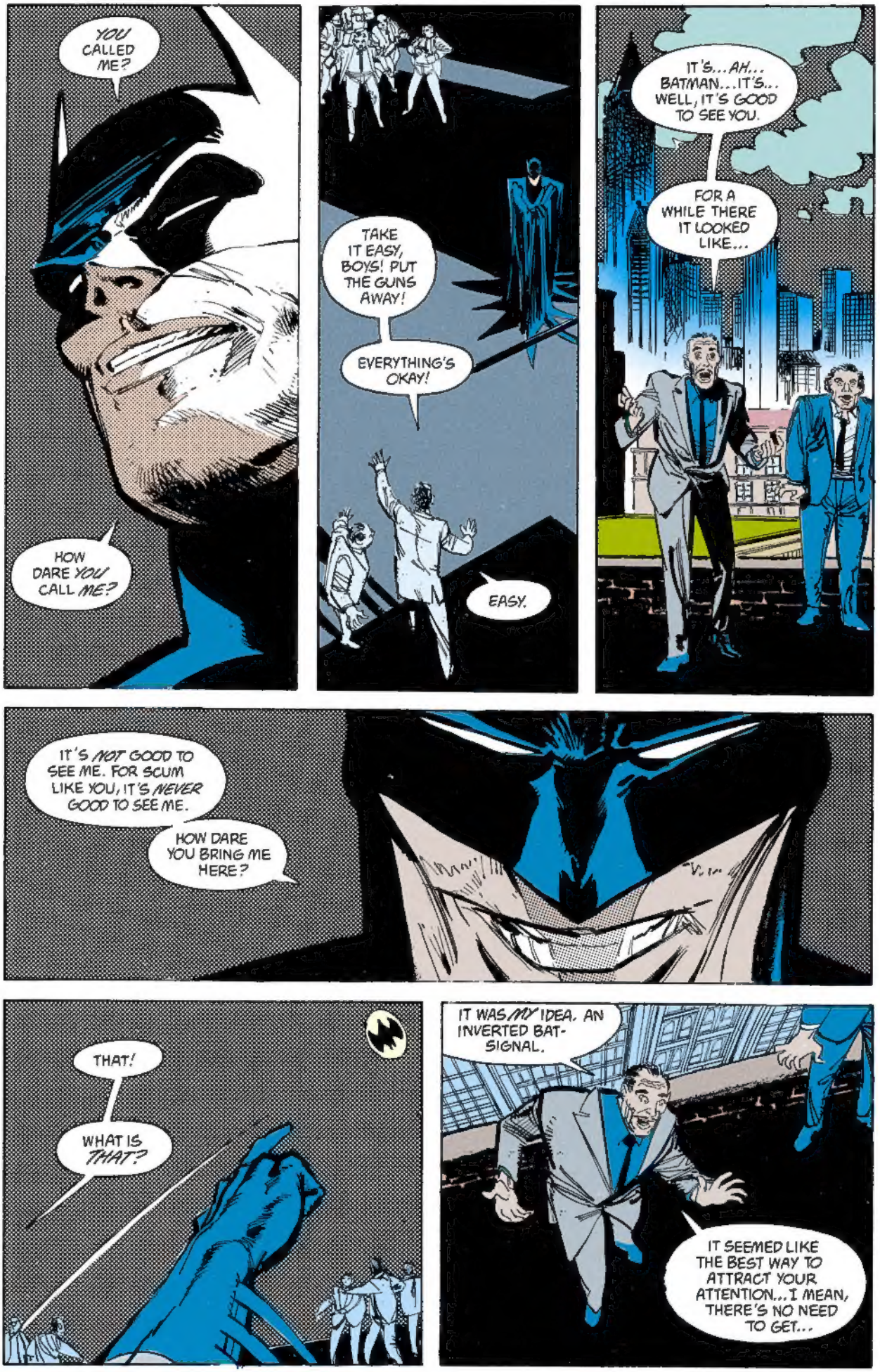
The Death Ship

Colored by Steve Buccellato
Lettered by John Costanza

Andrew Helfer, Editor
Kevin Dooley, Ass't. Editor

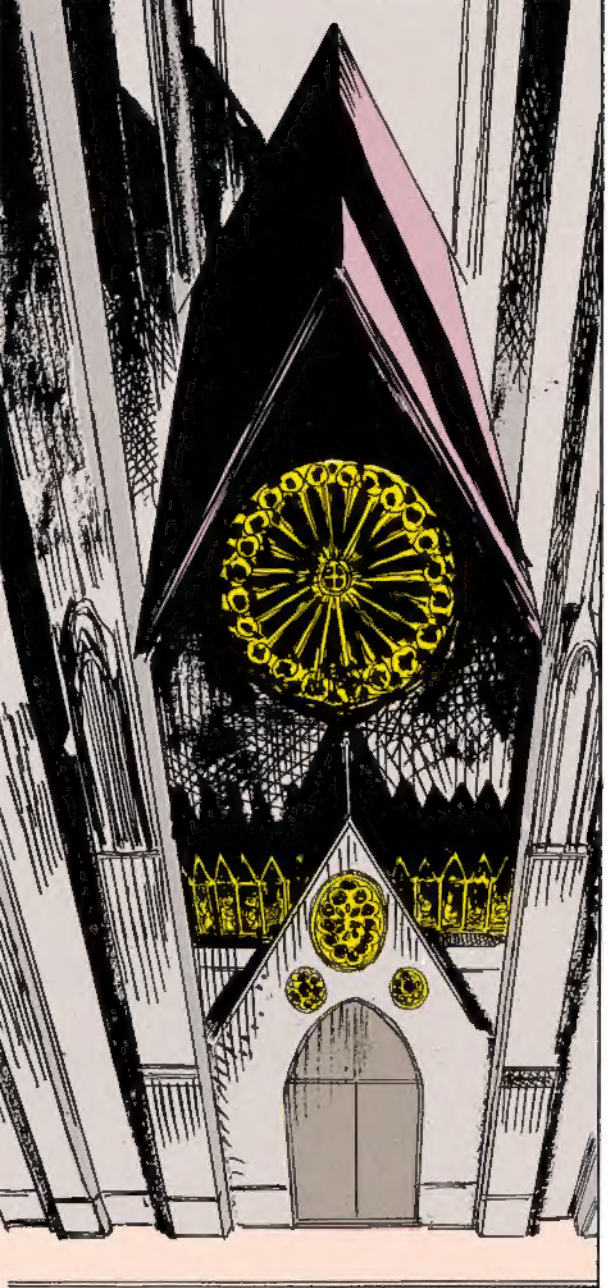
CONVERSION BY WILDSTORM

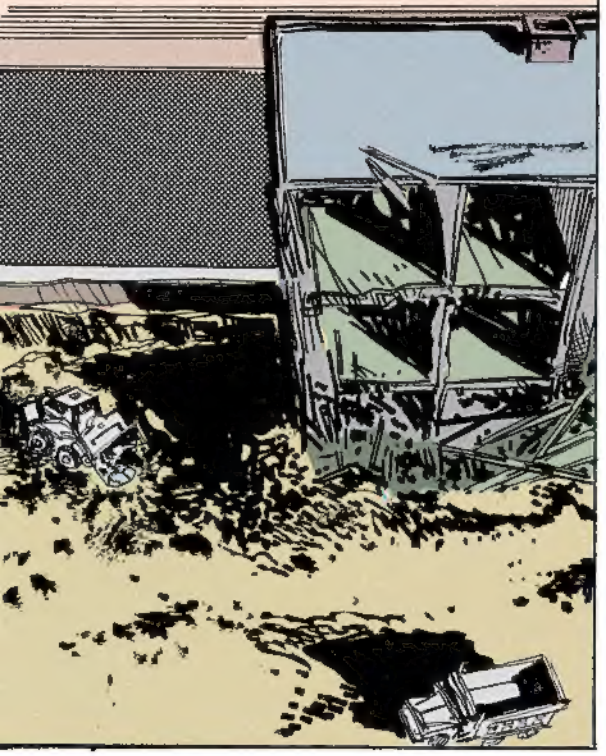

I TOLD YOU, DIDN'T I?
WHAT DID I TELL YOU, OTTAVIO?
THIS IS THE DUMBEST THING I EVER SAW.
HE'LL COME.
EXACTLY. BUT WHAT IN GOD'S NAME ARE WE DOING CALLING ON BATMAN? I'M SORRY, BUT THAT'S SOMETHING I REALLY DON'T UNDERSTAND...
FRANKLY, I'M PRAYING THAT HE DOESN'T TURN UP...
TOO LATE.
I'M HERE.
MARY MOTHER OF GOD.

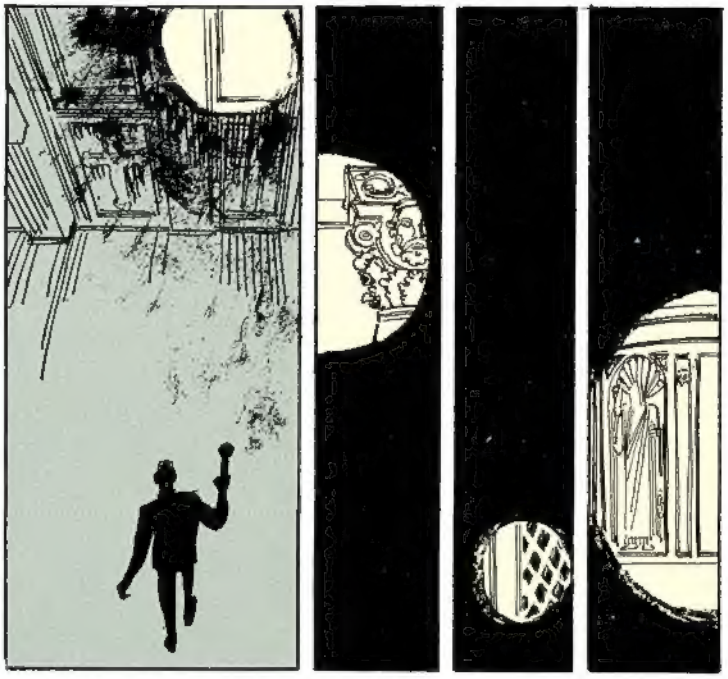

YOU CALLED ME?
HOW DARE YOU CALL ME?
TAKE IT EASY, BOYS! PUT THE GUNS AWAY!
EVERYTHING'S OKAY!
EASY.
IT'S...AH... BATMAN...IT'S... WELL, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU.
FOR A WHILE THERE IT LOOKED LIKE...
IT'S NOT GOOD TO SEE ME. FOR SCUM LIKE YOU, IT'S NEVER GOOD TO SEE ME.
HOW DARE YOU BRING ME HERE?
THAT!
WHAT IS THAT?
IT WAS MY IDEA. AN INVERTED BAT-SIGNAL.
IT SEEMED LIKE THE BEST WAY TO ATTRACT YOUR ATTENTION... I MEAN, THERE'S NO NEED TO GET...

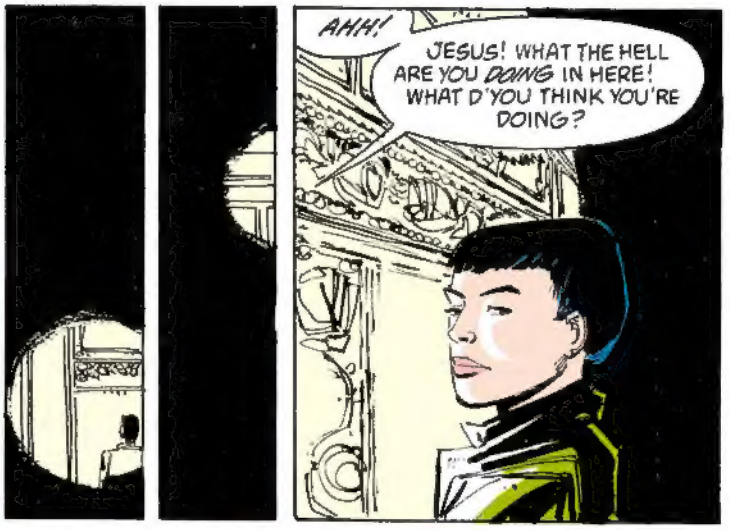
SWITCH IT OFF, NOW!
DON'T EVER USE THAT SYMBOL AGAIN, YOU HEAR ME?
YOU HEARD THE MAN! KILL IT, BOYS!
LOOK, IT WAS THE ONLY WAY. WE NEED HELP. WE WANT TO MAKE A DEAL WITH YOU. A BARGAIN.
THIS THING THAT'S HAPPENING, WE CAN'T HANDLE IT ON OUR OWN...
A GUY WHO WON'T STAY DEAD, FOR GOD'S SAKE!
WE KILLED HIM AND HE WON'T STAY DEAD. THE PAPERS CALLED HIM MR. WHISPER. TWENTY YEARS AGO. HE MURDERED EIGHT KIDS.
AND NOW HE'S BACK AND HE'S KILLING US, ONE BY ONE, LIKE HE PROMISED. THE MAN WITH NO SHADOW.
WHAT THING?
TWENTY YEARS AGO, WE KILLED HIM. WE HAD TO KILL HIM BEFORE HE DID IT AGAIN. ME, MORGENSTERN HERE, THE KANE BROTHERS, LEO GRAZIANO... WE KILLED HIM.
HE'S BACK!
HE'S SENT US CARDS. HE'S SENDING US CARDS AND HE'S PICKING US OFF ONE BY ONE AND WE CAN'T SEEM TO STOP HIM!
AND YOU WANT TO MAKE A BARGAIN? WITH ME?

A CRIME ARMISTICE, BATMAN. WE SUSPEND ALL OUR ACTIVITIES, WE KEEP THE STREETS CLEAN UNTIL YOU FIND *WHISPER*.
HOW ABOUT IT?...
CLEAN? YOU CAN *NEVER* BE CLEAN. DRUGS. PROSTITUTION. PROTECTION. CORRUPTION. ASSASSINATION. THIS CITY IS SICK. ITS PEOPLE ARE SICK WITH *FEAR*.
NOW *YOU* KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE.
WHAT?
YOU AND YOUR KIND HAVE TURNED GOTHAM CITY INTO A *HELL*.
NOW ROT IN IT.
I TOLD YOU, DIDN'T I?

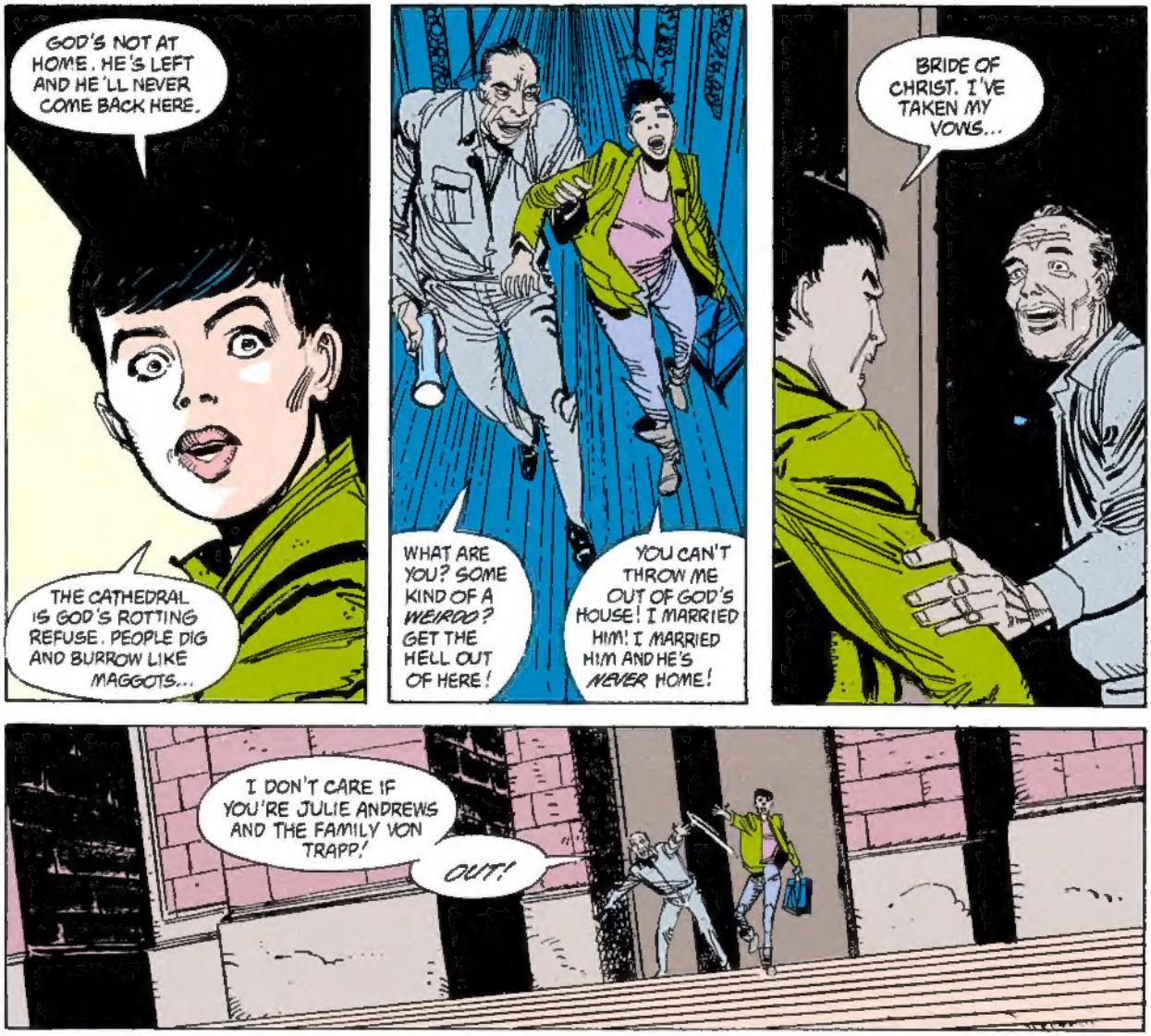







AHH!
JESUS! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING IN HERE! WHAT D'YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

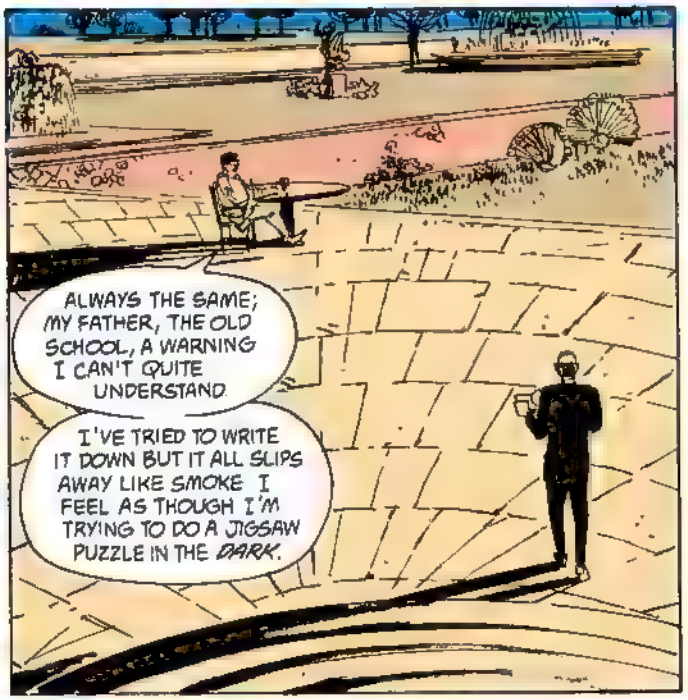
GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE! COME ON! THE CATHEDRAL'S CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC UNTIL NEXT WEEK.
I KNOW. MAY DAY.
IT OPENS ON MAY DAY.


GOD'S NOT AT HOME. HE'S LEFT AND HE'LL NEVER COME BACK HERE.
THE CATHEDRAL IS GOD'S ROTTING REFUSE. PEOPLE DIG AND BURROW LIKE MAGGOTS...
WHAT ARE YOU? SOME KIND OF A *WEIRDO*? GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE!
YOU CAN'T THROW ME OUT OF GOD'S HOUSE! I MARRIED HIM! I MARRIED HIM AND HE'S *NEVER* HOME!
BRIDE OF CHRIST. I'VE TAKEN MY VOWS...
I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE JULIE ANDREWS AND THE FAMILY VON TRAPP!
OUT!
CHEESE.
I'LL BE BACK.
TROUBLE, MR. TRIMBLE?
AH, JUST A KID. LOOKED LIKE SHE WAS HIGH ON *SOMETHING* BUT SHE CLAIMED SHE WAS SOME KIND OF A *NUN*.
YEAH, AND CHARLIE MANSON WAS AN ARCHBISHOP! SORRY ABOUT THAT, MR. *WICKER*.
A LITTLE NUN? THERE'S A CERTAIN *SYMMETRY* HERE.
MY LIFE'S PATH BECOMES A *CIRCLE*.
AND A CIRCLE IS *FOREVER*.

FATHER?
FATHER, THE SHIP IS COMING... BLACK SAILED... UNFAMILIAR...
DAD? PLEASE, DAD... DON'T STAY HERE.
WHAT ARE YOU WRITING? DOTS AND LINES...
FATHER, COME AWAY. THE SHIP IS GETTING CLOSER.
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?
UNLOCK THE ROSE
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
DAD, PLEASE, WE HAVE TO RUN AND HIDE BEFORE THE...

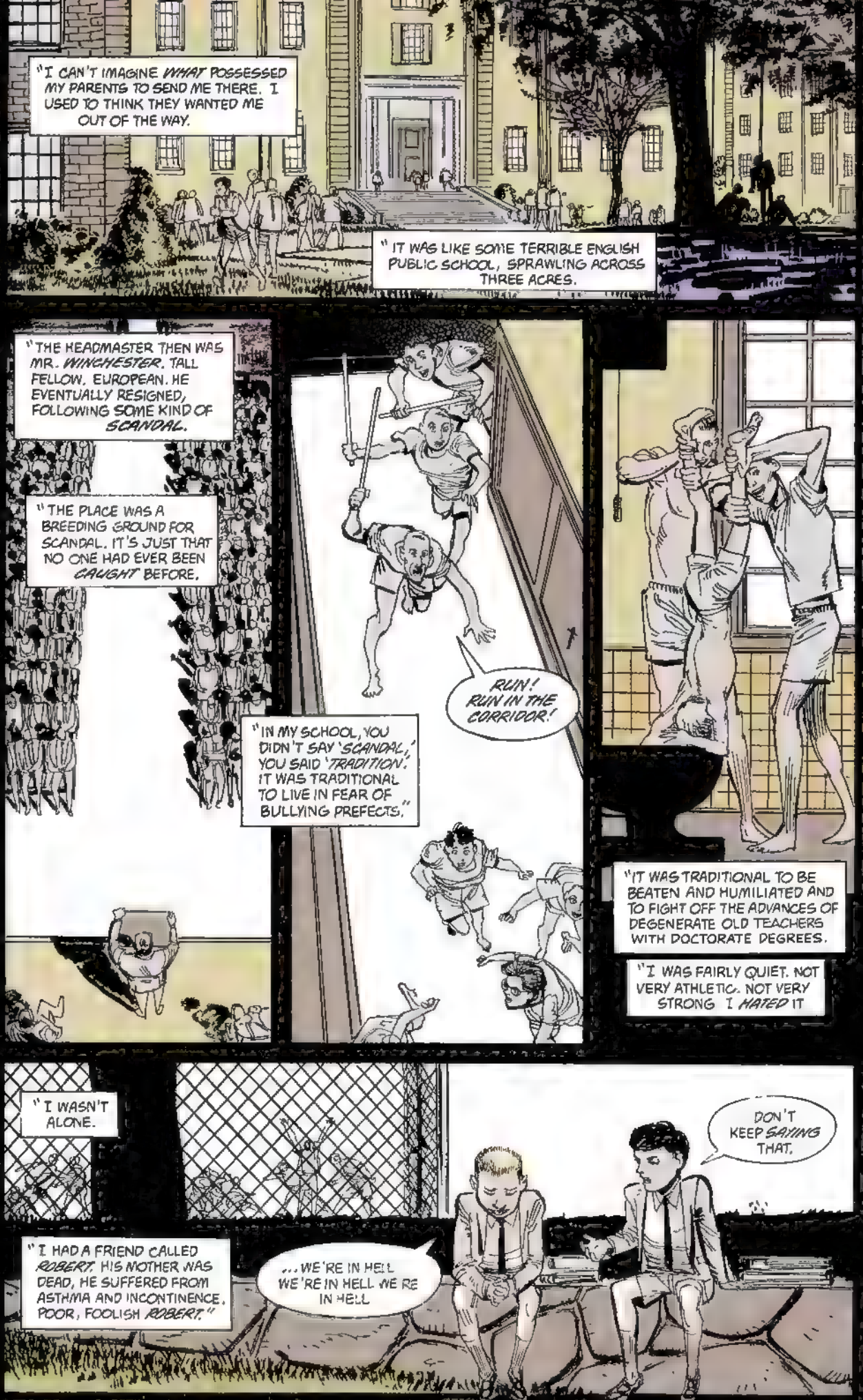
DAD?
RING AROUND THE ROSIE, A POCKETFUL OF POSIES...
ASHES! ASHES!
WE ALL
FALL
DOWN!
SET US FREE.
UNLOCK THE ROSE.
THE WORMS BUILD TUNNELS AND GALLERIES IN OUR CORRUPTED CRYPTED FLESH.
SUCH A LOVELY PERFUME. A PERFUME TO BREAK YOUR HEART.
DEAD THESE TWENTY YEARS.
UNLOCK THE ROSE.
WAYNE?
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A DIRTY LITTLE SNEAK, WAYNE.
I HAVE WAYS OF DEALING WITH DIRTY LITTLE SNEAKS...

YOU WERE SAYING, MASTER BRUCE ?
THE DREAMS, YES.


ALWAYS THE SAME; MY FATHER, THE OLD SCHOOL, A WARNING I CAN'T QUITE UNDERSTAND
I'VE TRIED TO WRITE IT DOWN BUT IT ALL SLIPS AWAY LIKE SMOKE I FEEL AS THOUGH I'M TRYING TO DO A JIGSAW PUZZLE IN THE DARK.

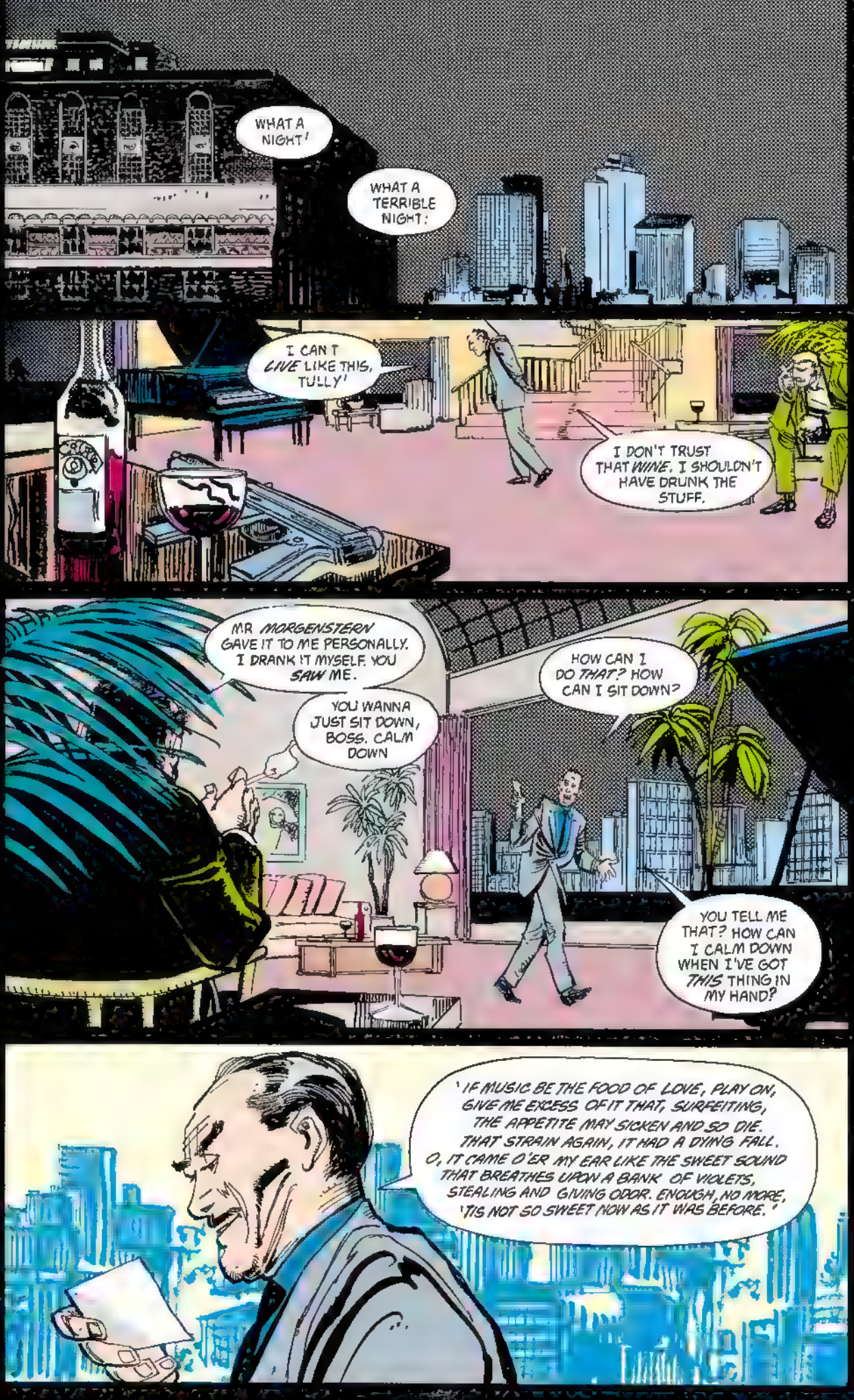
I'M AFRAID I RARELY DREAM-- AND WHEN I DO IT TENDS TO INVOLVE PYGMIES, BAKEWELL TART AND THE DRY-CLEANING PROCESS.
AND WHEN OTTAVIO MENTIONED A MAN WITH NO SHADOW, I SUDDENLY REMEMBERED SOMETHING.
HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU ABOUT MY SCHOOLDAYS, ALFRED?

NOT RECENTLY, IT MUST BE SAID.
I WAS SENT TO A PRIVATE SCHOOL. UPSTATE.
I HATED IT.

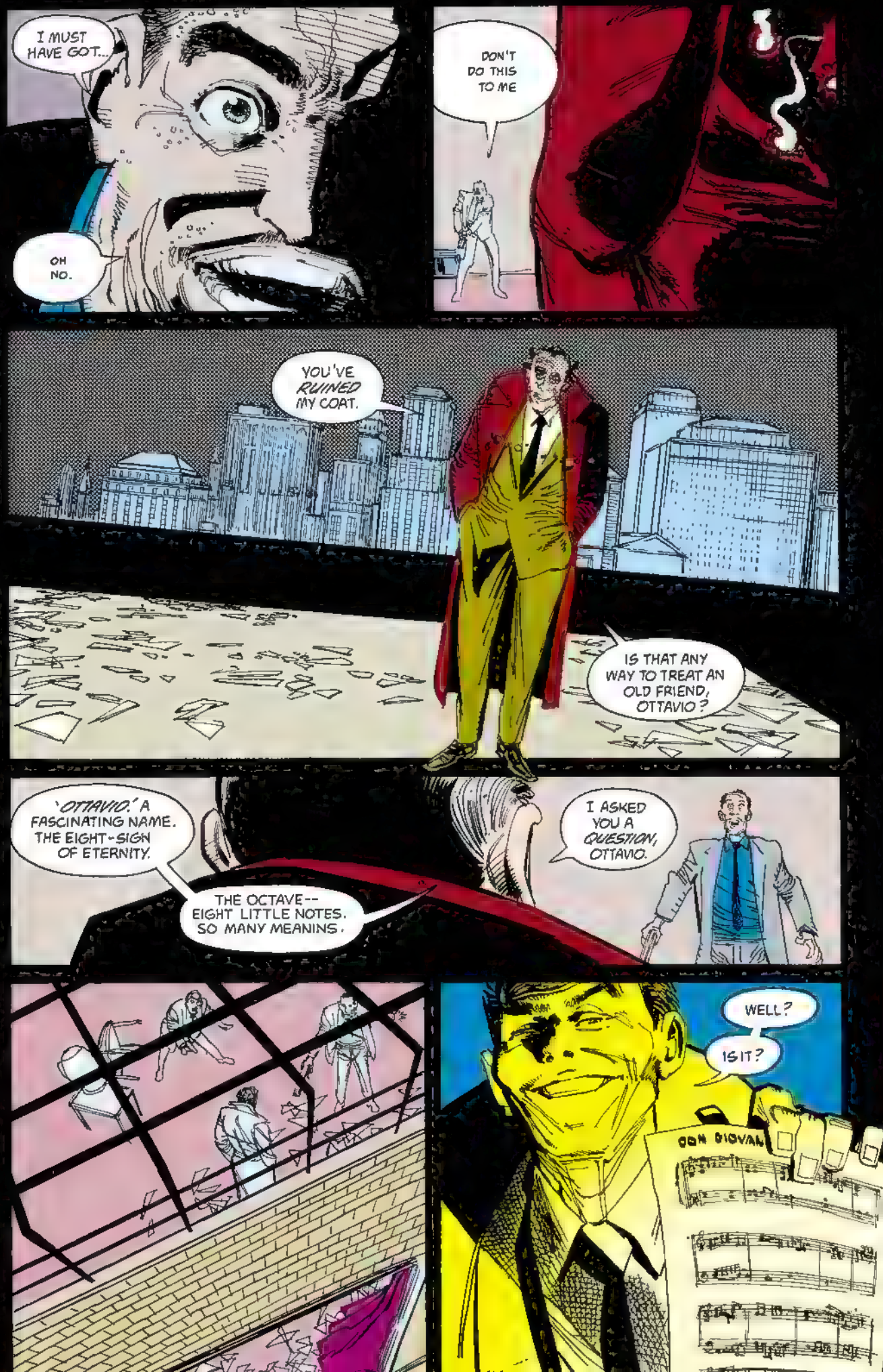

"I CAN'T IMAGINE *WHAT* POSSESSED MY PARENTS TO SEND ME THERE. I USED TO THINK THEY WANTED ME OUT OF THE WAY.
"IT WAS LIKE SOME TERRIBLE ENGLISH PUBLIC SCHOOL, SPRAWLING ACROSS THREE ACRES.
"THE HEADMASTER THEN WAS MR. *WINCHESTER*. TALL FELLOW. EUROPEAN. HE EVENTUALLY RESIGNED, FOLLOWING SOME KIND OF *SCANDAL*.
"THE PLACE WAS A BREEDING GROUND FOR SCANDAL. IT'S JUST THAT NO ONE HAD EVER BEEN *CAUGHT* BEFORE.
RUN! RUN IN THE CORRIDOR!
"IN MY SCHOOL, YOU DIDN'T SAY 'SCANDAL,' YOU SAID '*TRADITION*'. IT WAS TRADITIONAL TO LIVE IN FEAR OF BULLYING PREFECTS."
"IT WAS TRADITIONAL TO BE BEATEN AND HUMILIATED AND TO FIGHT OFF THE ADVANCES OF DEGENERATE OLD TEACHERS WITH DOCTORATE DEGREES.
"I WAS FAIRLY QUIET. NOT VERY ATHLETIC. NOT VERY STRONG. I *HATED* IT
"I WASN'T ALONE.
DON'T KEEP *SAYING* THAT.
"I HAD A FRIEND CALLED *ROBERT*. HIS MOTHER WAS DEAD, HE SUFFERED FROM ASTHMA AND INCONTINENCE. POOR, FOOLISH *ROBERT*."
...WE'RE IN HELL WE'RE IN HELL WE'RE IN HELL

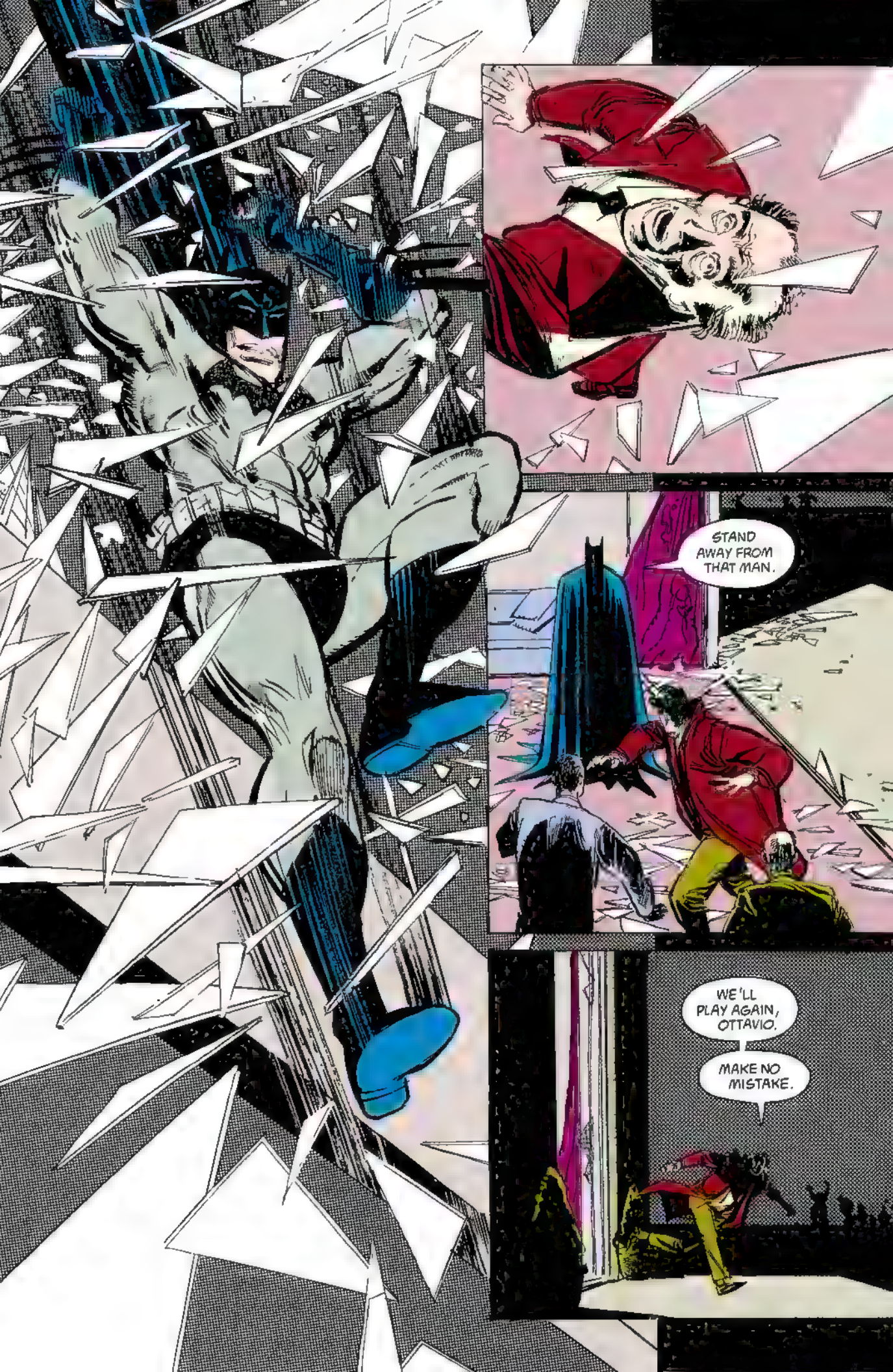
WELL, WE ARE! WINCHESTER IS THE DEVIL! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT HE DOES!
DON'T SAY THAT. HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?
HE HAS NO SHADOW!
"NOT LONG AFTERWARD, ROBERT WAS GONE. NOBODY WAS SURPRISED: HE'D BEEN GETTING WEAKER, GETTING ILL. AND THEN ONE DAY HE WAS JUST GONE.
NO SHADOW.
"NO SHADOW.
"I COULDN'T GET IT OUT OF MY HEAD."
WAYNE?
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A DIRTY LITTLE SNEAK, WAYNE.
I HAVE WAYS OF DEALING WITH DIRTY LITTLE SNEAKS...
"WINCHESTER FAVORED THE ENGLISH STYLE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT: BIRCHING."
BEND OVER, WAYNE.
"I BENT OVER.
"I THINK HE WANTED ME TO SEE. LOOKING BACK ON IT NOW, I THINK HE MUST HAVE WANTED IT.
"AND I DID SEE.

"BUT THAT WASN'T THE WORST THING. BAD AS IT WAS, IT WASN'T THE *WORST* THING."
OH, YOU THINK IT HURTS *NOW*, WAYNE. YOU THINK IT HURTS NOW BUT JUST YOU WAIT.
I'LL TEACH YOU *PAIN*..
"THE *WORST* THING...
"THE WORST THING WAS WHAT I *DIDN'T* SEE.
UTTERLY *SPINE-CHILLING*, MASTER BRUCE. IT'S HEARTENING TO KNOW THAT, IN SPITE OF SUCH HARROWING EXPERIENCES, YOU GREW UP RADIANTLY *NORMAL*...
FOR YEARS I MANAGED TO CONVINCE MYSELF THAT I'D *IMAGINED* THE WHOLE THING. THE SENSES OF A CHILD ARE OFTEN HEIGHTENED, DISTORTED.
I WAS *SURE* I'D IMAGINED IT.
TWENTY YEARS AGO.
PREPARE MY *UNIFORM*, PLEASE, ALFRED.


WHAT A NIGHT!
WHAT A TERRIBLE NIGHT!
I CAN'T LIVE LIKE THIS, TULLY!
I DON'T TRUST THAT WINE. I SHOULDN'T HAVE DRUNK THE STUFF.
MR MORGENSTERN GAVE IT TO ME PERSONALLY. I DRANK IT MYSELF. YOU SAW ME.
YOU WANNA JUST SIT DOWN, BOSS. CALM DOWN
HOW CAN I DO THAT? HOW CAN I SIT DOWN?
YOU TELL ME THAT? HOW CAN I CALM DOWN WHEN I'VE GOT THIS THING IN MY HAND?
'IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD OF LOVE, PLAY ON,
GIVE ME EXCESS OF IT THAT, SURFEITING,
THE APPETITE MAY SICKEN AND SO DIE.
THAT STRAIN AGAIN, IT HAD A DYING FALL.
O, IT CAME O'ER MY EAR LIKE THE SWEET SOUND
THAT BREATHES UPON A BANK OF VIOLETS,
STEALING AND GIVING ODOR. ENOUGH, NO MORE,
'TIS NOT SO SWEET NOW AS IT WAS BEFORE.'

YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS, TULLY? THIS IS A *DEATH CERTIFICATE* I'VE GOT HERE.
SIMPLE AS THAT IT...
OH MY GOD.
HE'S OUT THERE! IT'S *HIM!*
HE'S OUT THERE!
I GOT HIM. I THINK I GOT HIM.
WHERE THE HELL *WERE* YOU, TULLY?


I MUST HAVE GOT...
OH NO.
DON'T DO THIS TO ME
YOU'VE RUINED MY COAT.
IS THAT ANY WAY TO TREAT AN OLD FRIEND, OTTAVIO?
'OTTAVIO.' A FASCINATING NAME. THE EIGHT-SIGN OF ETERNITY.
THE OCTAVE-- EIGHT LITTLE NOTES. SO MANY MEANINS.
I ASKED YOU A QUESTION, OTTAVIO.
WELL?
IS IT?
DON GIOVAN


STAND AWAY FROM THAT MAN.
WE'LL PLAY AGAIN, OTTAVIO.
MAKE NO MISTAKE.

YOU
DON'T MOVE.
OH GOD. OH MY GOD.
I'M ALIVE.
AND WHERE THE HELL WERE YOU, TULLY?
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO BE PAYING YOU FOR, YOU...
TULLY? IF THIS IS A JOKE, I'M NOT LAUGHING.
TULLY?
OH NO,

THERE'S NOWHERE TO HIDE.
DO YOU HEAR ME? THERE'S JUST YOU AND ME AND A FIVE HUNDRED FOOT DROP TO THE SIDEWALK.
AND THERE'S NOWHERE TO...
KNNNGH!

YOU AND ME!
YOU!
AND!
ME!

HAKK
NNNFF

COME ON COME ON COME ON!
OKAY. LET'S GO. LET'S
YOU AND ME.
TOO BAD.
AND NOW OTTAVIO.
WINCHESTER.

I...
I KNOW YOU.
I KNOW YOU.
WINCHESTER!
COME BACK!
OWW.

OTTAVIO! WHICH IS THE QUICKEST WAY DOWN TO...
OTTAVIO,
DAMN.
I KNOW YOU.

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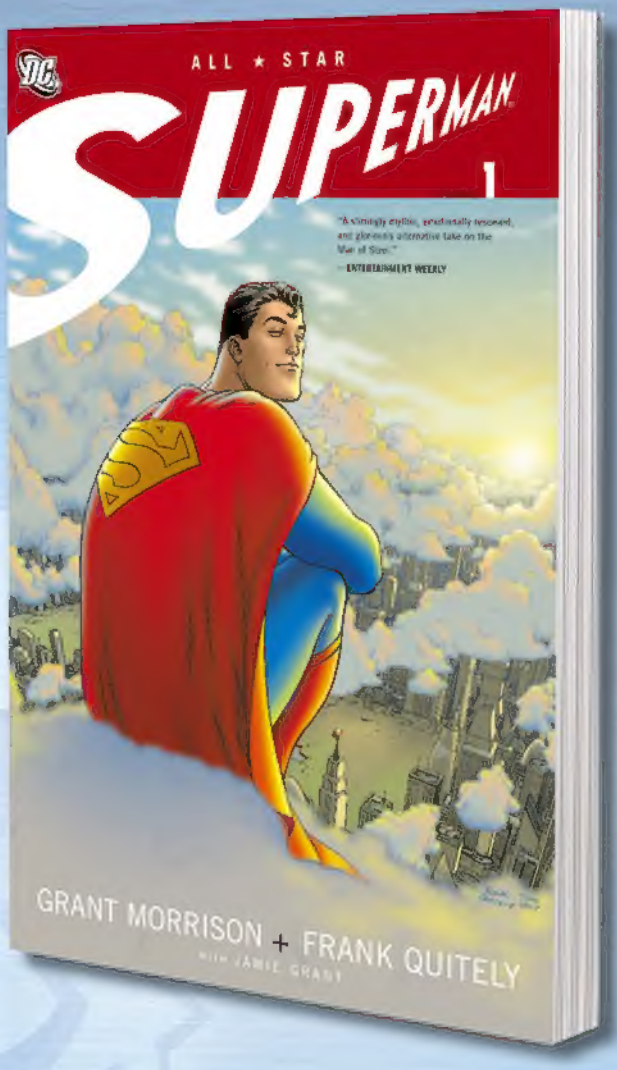

BATMAN: GOTHIC

with
KLAUS JANSON

BATMAN:
ARKHAM ASYLUM

with
DAVE McKEAN
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VOLS. 1-4

with
VARIOUS ARTISTS

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